

Lola developed as part of a cyclone pair that formed on opposite sides of the equator near 165°E (Figure 4-3). The tendency for such development is greater during late fall and early spring when tropical cyclone activity is shifting into the oncoming summer hemisphere.

The beginning of Lola appeared in satellite pictures on the 28th. The system, destined to become Lola, drifted slowly westward through the eastern Carolines, attaining tropical storm intensity the next day, about 150 nm northeast of Ponape. Shifting to a more northerly track, Lola reached typhoon strength on the afternoon of the 31st.

During Lola's passage north of Ponape, the maximum sustained wind was 30 kt with gusts to 50 kt (30/1600 GMT). Lola's forward motion brought high winds and seas to Ponape and nearby atolls for a prolonged period, and extensive damage resulted. Two fishermen were reported missing and estimates of damage to public buildings and crops exceeded 18,000 dollars (U.S.). Wave action destroyed most of the water system creating a serious fresh water shortage. Reports from Pingelap and Mokil atolls stated that high seas had inundated inland areas destroying over 60 houses.

As Lola was developing to typhoon intensity (Figure 4-4), a block formed in the westerlies in the central North Pacific with ridging extending northeastward to the Aleutian chain. With this distortion of the subtropical ridge, a trough developed west-southwestward from a 500-mb low near Midway. By the evening of the 1st, Lola responded to this weakness and shifted to a north-northeast course at 10 kt.

Lola attained her peak intensity on the 2nd as reconnaissance aircraft reported a central pressure of 956 mb and maximum surface winds near 100 kt. The aircraft's radar detected little evidence of convective activity around the typhoon's circular, 40 nm eye. Reports from the aircraft's observer indicated that the wall cloud was comprised mainly of altostratus.

The USNS ASTERION, located 90 nm north-northwest of Lola's center (02/0000 GMT) observed 65-kt winds and a pressure of 987.8 mb.

Lola continued on a north-northeast heading for the next three days at an average speed of 14 kt, weakening to tropical storm force on the afternoon of the 4th. By the 5th Lola had swung to a more northeasterly heading and become extratropical.

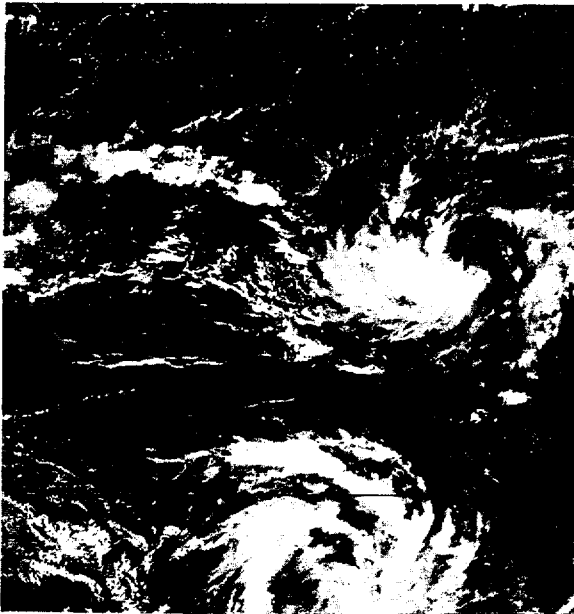


FIGURE 4-3. The twin tropical storms of Lola (120 nm northeast of Ponape) and Ida (in the Solomon Island group), 30 May 1972, 0212 GMT (DAPP data).



FIGURE 4-4. Typhoon Lola 270 nm west of Eniwetok, 1 June 1972, 0143 GMT (DAPP data).